

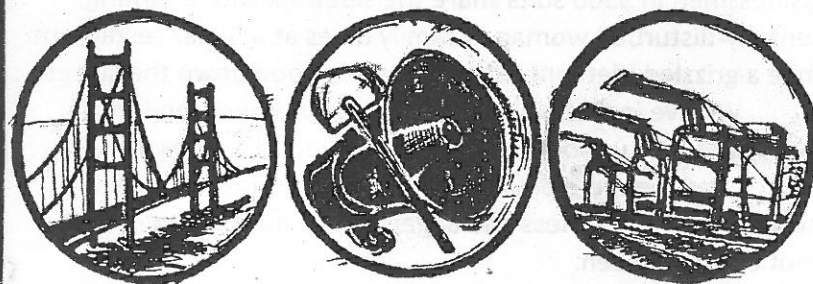
"As a citizen, I have the freedom of being able to ask: what's better for the community, this farm or more developments? The farm is an anchor of a burgeoning sustainability movement, and after seeing all the good it can do, are we still going to go in there and build? I

think the issue is bigger than one city block."

—Speaker at Gezi Gardens General Assembly



## ***Bay Area Rebellion***



## ***2013: A Year in Review***

On September 17, 2011, we moved in. We convened. We reclaimed space.

We illuminated the whole city. A city that was once stolen from the people that inhabited it, and was being stolen once again; a city where the fire that keeps the candles lit, the water flowing, the engine running, burns in a brutally imbalanced way; a city that stretches for only seven miles in every direction, shifting its shape, form and color through row houses, factories, high-rises and vacant lots; a city that bleeds into a phantasmagoria of opulence and poverty. Here, billboards adorn prominent high-rises in the financial district: "Penthouses now starting at \$1 million". Businessmen in \$300 suits share the sidewalk with a ranting, mentally-disturbed woman. A family dines at a 5-star restaurant while a grizzled Vietnam veteran begs for food down the street.

We live in this place but have no consideration for the institutions that uphold it. We feel no compassion towards the leaders that seek re-election. We feel disenfranchised, we feel cheated, we feel sadness and anger and confusion and every emotion in between.

As the call came out, rebellion erupted all around us. We popped up tents, hung up tarps and collected heaps of cardboard to be used as bedding on the cold San Francisco asphalt. We shared food, shelter, and stories of days past. We braved the weather, as well as batons and police intimidation. We found more than a political movement. We found a family.

The following publication is more or less a retelling of events that transpired in the San Francisco Bay Area in the year 2013. They appear here in chronological order and involve a tight-knit affinity group of political and environmental activists. It is our hope to spread knowledge and inspiration to all freedom fighters and rad(ical) human beings on planet Earth. We love you.

"scaled to greys"

mushroom umbrella cloud  
overcasting the happy unreality, facing fear visually,

the homeless man  
declaring glee in one unfortunate instant forgets  
to think, behave cautiously,

overshadowed in an instant by suited blue,  
misunderstood human heart to heart, emotionally charged  
fear formed by uniform. thought. the idea is to rise up, but  
not in every sense of the word.

a raised voice isn't necessarily understood  
unheard by someone yelling orders, following  
what's told. this is where confusion lies.

two men unaware of each other's lives, who could know  
if one grew up adrift in his father's loving shadow, and how  
could the other read struggle of guessing survival in his entire life?  
what is what within and who is judging whom?

-rm

Thanks to your superior laws  
 We can't live off the land no more  
 There's so much empty space  
 And I still can't afford a fucking home  
 You may like to think  
 That we need currency to feed us  
 Money may not grow on trees  
 But I'm sure as hell that food does  
 So, fuck everything that you know  
 Self-worth is not measured in gold

Civilization is a constant shipwreck  
 You get a good job, buy a nice house,  
 Then you die  
 So tighten your laces, shine your boots  
 And greet the world on a knife's edge  
 There has never been a better time  
 To be alive

Every fucking house you rent  
 Makes the world a little bit  
 More homeless  
 Everything you consume  
 Means the death of another million  
 Human beings  
 Everything that you do  
 Affects somebody,  
 Somewhere

-Okapi



**"Permaculture is revolution disguised  
 as organic gardening"**  
 —Graham Burnett

The origins of the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Council (HANC) can be traced back to 1959, when 200 concerned citizens met at Dudley Stone School in hopes of halting the city-backed State Highway Department's Expansion Program. The program would have paved over the Panhandle and a part of Golden Gate Park with a six-lane freeway, forcing the displacement of hundreds of residents. HANC's many achievements throughout the years include the prevention of high-rise construction, halting the further gentrification of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. In 1974, HANC organized one of the city's first recycling centers, and later introduced Kezar Gardens, a 50-bed community garden and native plant nursery. Having struggled with the city for many years, HANC finally lost its strenuous battle against eviction on December 29, 2012. In an effort to gentrify the area and get rid of its "homeless-people-with-shopping carts" image, the Haight-Ashbury

Neighborhood Improvement Association lobbied to get rid of the HANC Recycling Center and Kezar Gardens for a community garden controlled by the Department of Parks & Recreation.

On the last days of 2012, a 24-hour encampment began at Kezar Gardens. HANC members as well as concerned Haight-Ashbury residents and Bay Area environmental activists sought to occupy the garden and protect it from eviction. Before long, the group expanded the functions of the garden and created the Golden Gate Ecology Center. They built a demonstration rainwater collection system and constructed a greenhouse, which would serve as a plant nursery for starting seedlings to be grown and given away for free. The garden was also host to a seed and tool library for people to get free seeds and borrow tools to work on gardens and projects, as well as a variety of books on ecology, permaculture and organic food growing. Protestors wanted to show the importance of an autonomous neighborhood space aimed at creating sustainability and regenerative practices but on January 4<sup>th</sup> the Golden Gate Ecology Center was raided with very little physical resistance or support from people in the neighborhood.

However, there are upwards of 6 gardens in the city of Oakland that were created in 2012 and are still thriving. People found these neglected spaces, opened the gates, turned the soil and transformed overgrown weeds into gardens rich in food, habitat, and biological life. A network is forming in the east bay to map these transformations and all the potential empty lots and marginal spaces that could follow in the footsteps of these guerrilla gardens. People all over the Bay Area have begun to take back the land and growing healthy food sustainably. In the best of cases, the long-term residents even take agency over the gardens that have been started in their neighborhoods, watering, weeding, gathering eggs from chicken coops and harvesting greens, vegetables, and fruits.

The San Francisco Commune  
shakes its head with a bikey  
laugh of smoke like neighborhood  
11 year old Phillip wanting to  
cook veggies and tofu, plus  
platas plus baton twirling  
planter box dancing soil  
changing in a fraying  
fragile, foldy world  
fucked and up and never  
fucking up love  
making love like doing dishy sinks beside  
bedsidebyside shadow room  
wide-eyed figuring this  
communebunksquat thing  
drifting in a space for all  
tall and racey, spicy  
space large and heavy  
tangy space thready  
torches in the attic, sugar  
coffee weed, revising us all  
towards harmony circles  
like affinity rainbows  
good morning, children  
I love you, how you doin  
these days

-good morning



**"They Are All Trying To Kill You"**

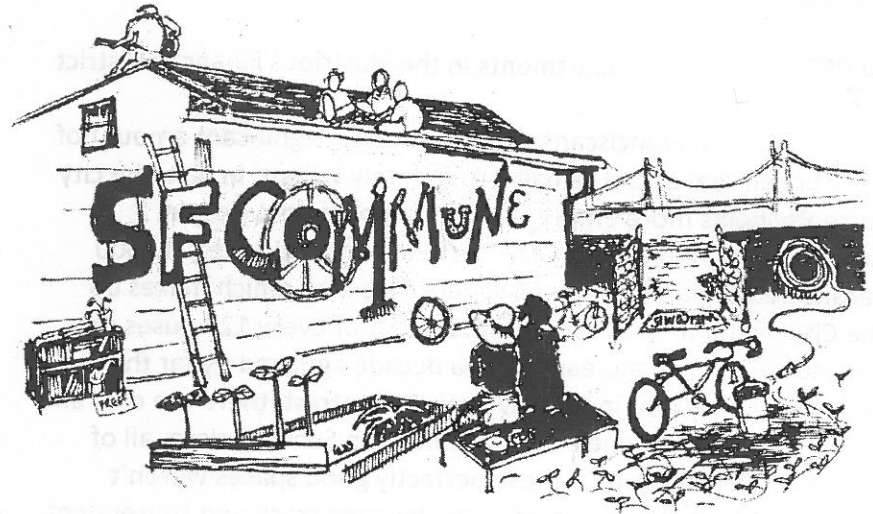
And the more they do the better it feels,  
but as you grin your soul swells with hatred,  
and your back is breaking but your mind is liquefied  
and kept at a cool temperature for the demons to grow,  
you're a cesspool of reproduction,  
redefining the primordial ooze that drips from Satan's mouth,  
the suffering that you laugh at in American Dad  
is the dead man's trigger for Jihad,  
so as I smoke my life away I ask you to pray in vain  
so that when God does not answer hope will fill your heart  
like a sweet liquor and when the hell fire grips  
your mind, body and soul, it will be your heart  
that burns the brightest, because you should have known,  
you knew better, your convince has great cost.

So as you remember your martyrs and sell your idols  
still your heart, because your still breathing and being honest  
is harder than trying, 'cause when success  
means mourning your lost, then why not  
let it just be thrown up in a toss.

Rock stars and rich dicks race for the end with all the intention  
of lasting forever, suicide silence strewn across the street,  
hallows eve oh how hollow must we, you see I was there,  
saw the stair, and the glint of moneys flare in a wink  
of destiny doom that only lasts a moment,  
so STAND, stand up with your fist rising to defeat,  
'cause that's more than letting go of what you love,  
what is right now is not forever so get a grip on gravity  
or know defeat, so fucking sweet, just to know failure or defeat,  
success or victory, so much definition, so much clarity to be judged  
as I scream no GODS! NO MASTERS!

Your human disasters...

**-Dirt**



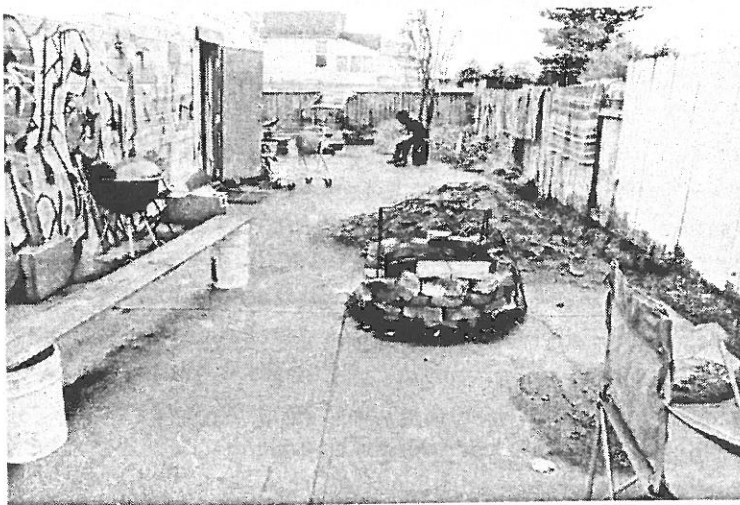
**"And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined and wanted food"**

**-William Wordsworth**

San Francisco has long been considered one of the toughest places to live in the United States. The high cost of living has made existing in the city without a well-paying job (or two) almost impossible. For the past two decades, throngs of longtime residents have been steadily driven out because they simply cannot afford it anymore, and many believe that the tech industry is to blame. Rent in San Francisco has been skyrocketing since the late 90's thanks to the dot-com boom, during which thousands of entrepreneurs and computer software engineers flooded the city and gentrified poor neighborhoods. After the Web 2.0 boom of the 2000's, a number of prominent tech companies moved from Silicon Valley to San Francisco, initiating an exodus of young, tech-savvy professionals, who have been steadily driving the price of real estate and displacing low-income and middle-class families. San Francisco is quickly becoming a city exclusively for rich people, where rent on a single-bedroom studio can go for upwards of

\$4,000 a month, and apartments in the illustrious Financial District can go for millions.

Few San Franciscans are aware that a significant amount of their priced real estate remains completely vacant. In fact, the city currently holds more empty homes than homeless people. According to 2010 census data, there are approximately 30,000 vacant housing units in the 46 square mile area which makes up the City by the Bay. This means that 1 out of every 12 houses are unoccupied, a 70% increase from a decade ago, and by far the highest vacancy rate in the Bay Area. In contrast, there are only an estimated 10,000 homeless people living in San Francisco, all of whom could be housed if these perfectly good spaces weren't being left to rot. Across America the housing crash and subsequent foreclosure crisis has shuttered over 8 million houses, and driven the total nationwide number to 18.5 million. Banks have been systematically foreclosing on tenants, kicking them to the curb and leaving their homes empty. Since there is no demand for these houses, many remain unoccupied. Some homes that are deemed not yet ready for the "market" are also left vacant to provide an illusion of scarcity and surge prices in the area.



Opposition to the center has swept Oakland, sparking intense discussion and protest. Concerned residents have attended every City Council meeting since July of 2012, demanding elected leaders to stop the DAC at once. On November 19, 2013, approximately 100 protestors held a rally outside of city hall on the night of the City Council meeting. They braved the heavy rain and packed City Hall to the brim, and although over 60 people had signed up to speak, the DAC item was placed last on the agenda by staff. It is common practice that items with the most speakers be moved up in the agenda, but in an attempt to silence opposition, Council President Kernigham refused to do so and people were kept waiting for 6 hours. The item was finally called for discussion at around midnight. Many of those who had signed up to speak had been forced to leave in order to commute home before public transportation stopped for the night. Regardless, the remaining speakers raved fervidly against the DAC. Protests and chants arose from the heated crowd at various points, echoing against the marble walls of the chambers. With members of the crowd chanting "**TABLE IT!**" the item was approved by all council members except Lynette McElhaney. As the vote was passed at around 1 in the morning, chants of "**SHAME! SHAME!**" erupted from the crowd. Council President Kernighan then commanded the police to clear the council chambers, only allowing members of the press with OPD press credentials to remain in the meeting.

At the time of this writing, the DAC is in its final stages and set to go before the full Oakland city council on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and it is very likely that it will pass. Massive surveillance centers are becoming rather prevalent in major US cities, and similar programs exist in Washington DC, New York City, Baltimore and Chicago. With technology advancing at an exponential rate, it is difficult to predict what the future has in store. If nothing is done now to stop these over-reaching surveillance programs, it will be impossible to do so once the government's desire for further surveillance spirals out of control.

Behind the scenes, the Oakland Police Department has been in charge of designing the DAC and many of its policies. The OPD has a track record ridden with violence and abuse towards the citizens they are sworn to protect. In October 2011, after dismantling the Occupy Oakland encampment at Oscar Grant Plaza, police indiscriminately attacked a mass of peaceful protestors with tear gas, pepper spray, flash grenades and a barrage of rubber bullets, severely injuring several of them and sending Iraq veteran Scott Olsen into a coma. The OPD is not only used as a strong-arm of the state to crush political dissent, they also disproportionately target people of color. Several African-Americans are murdered by Oakland police every year and the officers involved are seldom disciplined. From 2001 through 2011, \$57 million in settlements have been awarded to victims of police abuse, the highest in any city in the nation. With such a long history of corruption and no accountability, it is impossible to trust in the OPD's abilities of operating something as extensive and potentially harmful as the DAC.

Yet another blemish in the DAC's history has been the companies involved in its development. In October, 2012, it was revealed that SAIC, the original contractor slated to develop the center violated Measure T, Oakland's Nuclear Free Zone Ordinance that prevents the city from collaborating with companies that deal with nuclear weapons. SAIC was scrapped and four other contractors were brought on board: Schneider, Motorola, G4S, & GTSI. These four companies have also been suspected of collaborating on the design of nuclear weapons and will have to provide an audit to Oakland officials in order to qualify. In fear of breaching the time limit given by the DHS to be eligible for the \$10.9 million grant, it is likely that Oakland officials will look for a way to bypass Measure T altogether. By expediting the process and choosing a company that violates the nuclear free zone, officials will be teaming up with a distrustful contractor, making the project more dangerous than it already is.

Although these facts are generally obscured from the public eye, people everywhere are becoming aware of the blatant crimes committed by the real estate industry. A network of interworking squats and occupied spaces has been rapidly emerging across Bay Area cities such as San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley. On Easter Sunday of 2012, a group of San Francisco activists planned to curb this catastrophe by taking the matters into their own hands. The group took over an old, derelict church building and opened it up to the commons. They had one simple objective: to provide housing for those in need. The San Francisco Commune (or SFC, as it was affectionately known) stood on the corner of Broad St. and Capitol Ave. in Ocean View, a predominantly working-class neighborhood littered with run-down and neglected homes. Before the building was occupied, it had been strewn with trash, needles and feces, and long considered an eyesore by locals. When the group moved in, they instantly set to work, painting murals, rebuilding the kitchen, and even fixing the shoddy plumbing and electricity. They cleaned up the building and disposed of the hazardous materials inside, turning the once dilapidated building into a livable home. The site also became an organizing space that sprung many of the Bay Area's most memorable protests and direct actions in recent years.

The SFC was instantly welcomed into the community with open arms. Residents housed and fed anyone who walked through its doors, no matter their appearance or financial standing. A free store was set up with clothes for those not fortunate enough to afford their own, and every day after school, neighborhood kids would come by to play basketball, ride bikes and enjoy meals cooked in the kitchen. The Commune quickly became a safe space where adults and children alike could gather, communicate, share ideas, play music and create art together. A number of locals saw the space as a beacon of hope in a neighborhood beset with widespread drug use and violence. As time went on, more and



more vacant homes in the area were liberated from the grips of capitalism, many of which had lain abandoned for years.

The powers-that-be cast little hostility on the Commune throughout its year-long lifespan. Residents convened peacefully every night, with no fear of the police repression they faced on the streets. But that would all change in 2013. In the early days of April, a man showed up at the doorstep claiming to be the owner of the building. He berated the residents in broken English and told them that they had one week to vacate the building or he would come back with the police. Many were hesitant to believe the man, but the next day, news broke out that the building had been bought by two families who planned to demolish it. Residents were in utter shock. For the first time in its existence, the Commune seemed to be in danger of losing its footing.

Days later, a meeting was called to devise a plan of action. Nearly 50 activists, squatters and artists from around the Bay Area attended, ready to provide support and protect the space from the hands of the state. They decided to appeal to the neighborhood by paying forward the support they had received. Residents declared the SFC as no longer just a place to house people, but as a social center where community and mutual aid would thrive. They worked diligently in improving the conditions of their home by fixing the support beams, putting a fresh coat of paint on the exterior walls and disposing of the soil in the backyard, which was laden with lead and other toxic chemicals. Soon, the first three garden beds were built and planted using wood and filled with strawberries, raspberries, basil, kale, chard, and other edible and medicinal plants. The Ocean View neighborhood had been a food desert for a very long time, where organic and nutrient-rich food was expensive and hard to come by. For the first time, locals had a community garden which they could tend and collect food from whenever they pleased.

The surveillance state is currently on its way to the city of Oakland, one of America's hotbeds for radicalism and social unrest. When Oakland police officer Johannes Mehserle shot unarmed Oscar Grant in the back, Oakland rioted. When Mehserle was acquitted of a murder charge three years later, they rioted again. Massive wealth disparity as well as a lack of proper education and aid has riddled the city with widespread poverty and crime. Rather than use a \$10.9 million grant from the Department of Homeland Security to provide support for its people, Oakland officials have instead opted to construct a massive "data fusion center" called the Domain Awareness Center. The DAC will integrate hundreds of surveillance cameras and motion sensors, tracking anyone inside the city in a truly Orwellian fashion. Once fully active, the DAC will give Oakland officials the unparalleled ability to monitor people's associations and activities.

The DAC was originally intended to monitor the Port of Oakland, a 665-acre behemoth which transports \$30 billion of goods every year. It has since been expanded to observe the entire city of Oakland, aggregating video feeds and real-time data from a myriad of sources including 700 surveillance cameras at Oakland city schools and 135 at the Oakland Coliseum complex. This data will then be analyzed with license plate recognition, thermal imaging, body movement recognition and possibly even facial recognition software. It will be monitored 24 hours a day by the Oakland police and fire department. There are also currently no data retention policies in place, so it is possible that the information may be used at the whim of the city and federal government. Officials claim that the DAC is being developed in an effort to curb violence and prevent terrorism, but in the wrong hands it could be used to target minorities and squash dissent. E-mails obtained through a California Public Records Act request suggest that the DAC has already been used to monitor political demonstrations and other forms of free speech.



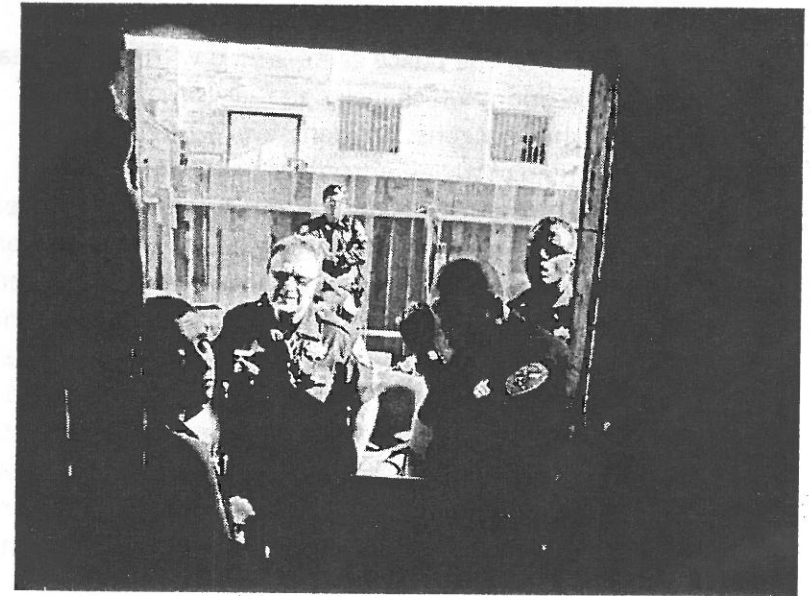


**"The most sacred thing is to be  
able to shut your own door."**

— G. K. Chesterton

It's September of 2011. Patriotism is at an all-time high and the mood of the people reeks of complacency. An unforeseen wave of surveillance approaches the United States of America. As civil rights begin to disintegrate before our very eyes, the government hopes nobody will notice, and we calmly stand by and watch. The Bush administration hurriedly passes the PATRIOT Act, codifying several privacy-draining measures and easing the warrantless wiretapping of phone calls and e-mails on citizens and non-citizens alike. People sign up in droves to attack two sovereign nations and bomb several others. With the help of the most powerful telecommunications corporations in the world, the National Security Agency keeps tabs on every single individual inside American borders. PRISM, BULLRUN, MAINWAY Boundless Informant, Stellar Wind. More surveillance, more corruption. Some see it as their duty to make these illegal and immoral practices known to the public. They are persecuted, jailed and tortured. The corruption continues, out of control.

The SFC received overwhelming support from the public after its transformation from commune to social center, but the momentum would not last long. At the crack of dawn of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, an army of SFPD officers swarmed on the Commune as residents prepared themselves for International Workers Day (commonly known as May Day), a worldwide day of protest. The police purposely planned to strike on a date they knew the activists would be preoccupied with organizing the various direct actions that the day had in store. Once they had encircled the building, their classic diatribe was delivered via megaphone, instructing anyone inside to vacate the premises or be subject to arrest. Residents scrambled out of bed and quickly gathered outside. They insisted that the officers show documentation, a search warrant, or anything that permitted their presence on the property. The police came up empty-handed and were forced to leave as the SFC erupted with raucous cheers. "The gods have smiled upon you," an SFPD officer said as he entered his cruiser and drove away.



Police intervention had been prevented but many felt a proper eviction was near. A city inspector visited the space several times during the following week, insisting that the building was not up to code and did not meet earthquake proof standards. Officials also claimed that since the site was a commercial building, not a residential space, people were not legally allowed to be housed there. Many felt this was a way for the city to justify an eviction and to maintain homelessness in San Francisco. A few days after the first attempted raid, SFC residents joined the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) and City Supervisor John Avalos on a blight tour of Ocean View, highlighting the vast amount of uninhabited buildings in the neighborhood. Two years prior, Avalos had stood in support of the Occupy San Francisco encampment at Chelsea Manning Plaza and 101 Market St. in the city's Financial District.

The SFC would see its last day on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013. At around 7am, a large SFPD contingent began to swarm around the building as a SWAT team assembled down the street. Several surrounding streets were blocked off, preventing anyone from filming or witnessing the events. The police came armed with full riot gear and an array of weapons which included tear gas launchers, automatic rifles and shotguns. Residents were greeted with extreme hostility and corralled outside as police searched the building. They ripped apart shelves and furniture and destroyed many of the residents' personal belongings. Guns were fixed on residents from multiple positions and some armed officers were even posted on nearby balconies and fire escapes. Within an hour, 28 people had been evicted from their homes and 4 were arrested. The windows and doors of the SFC were boarded up within hours and remain that way at the time of this writing. The building still goes unoccupied. It has not been demolished, and no "three-story multi-use facility" has been built, as the supposed owners claimed. Meanwhile in San Francisco, thousands of human beings are still without a place to sleep.

"As soon as I walked in I thought this place [Gezi Gardens] looks just like Gezi Park. Gezi is the final point of open green space surrounded by development in a very congested urban area. It is the last place where people can feel the earth."

-Turkish Citizen, Visitor at Gezi Gardens



# Liberate the Land

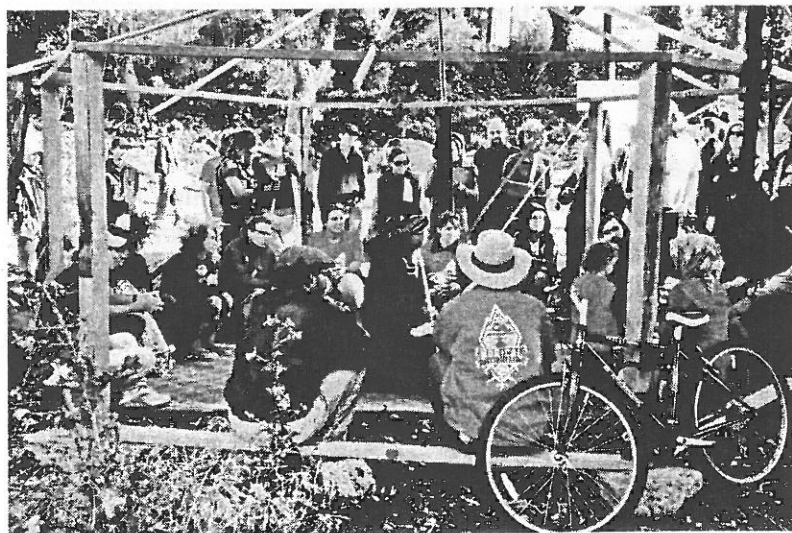
*Direct Action to Plant Food and Create Space*

**Saturday, June 1st, 1pm**  
**The Free Farm, 950 Gough St @ Eddy Street**

**humanbein.org** **#liberatetheland**

ramp and past the gardens in the early morning commute to work hardly had a clue of what happened that night. Throughout the daylight hours of the morning, the tree sitters returned from the hands of police with injuries and black eyes. One tree sitter claims he was punched in the eye while up in his platform and hospitalized after falling from a high point on a tree to the ground below during a police confrontation.

The energy in the response the day after the raid was nothing like what was witnessed across the ocean in Istanbul. There were no tens of thousands of people standing together in solidarity to keep the few green spaces in their city wild and free. In fact, it seemed as if the march to take back the space the following day was composed largely of the same 100+ folks that are at every action in the Bay Area, the ones who inoculate and maintain direct action and acts of resistance in hopes of it fermenting into a social movement with critical mass. The Hayes Valley Farm was bulldozed and cemented over for luxury condominiums. Months later, the community gardens of Esperanza Gardens and the Free Farm were also destroyed at the expense of the people who ate from these spaces and the biological life that inhabits them.



"The SFC rode up and down live waves. I remember one night, when it was pretty clean and seemingly all my friends were over there, drawing, making music, cooking, cuddling together, I looked around and felt so strongly lucky, like I was on this cutting-edge space of existence, "Oh goddess, this is the happiest, coolest place I could imagine!" I mean, how often does a huge, extended group of like, twenty friends get to all have a sleepover together, jamming the night away in such delicious, raucous love? Playing in a space where we can cook and shit and paint on the walls and smoke weed and make love, until we fall asleep scattered around the room on mats and mattresses, sleeping bags and couches. How AMAZING is this!? And planning more, and larger, and such exciting things together. And then, the next morning, the cops show up. They didn't make it inside, that time. (In fact, this simply motivated us into doing a really deep clean that day.) I found such truth inside that temporary community space. Loving the held-ness, the art freedom, the deep value everyone held for each other, the hodgepodge family, sharing our lives in such an intimate way. Since then, I've been seeking a way to re-create those feelings in a way that can last, that the cops have no reason to shut down. I have the deepest gratitude for all the people who danced there, showing me what the future will hold." -HH

"The SFC was a real important experience in my life because it showed me a positive style of collective living with a huge group of people. Many beautiful moments happened there and it is what shaped me up for the struggle that is still yet to come. Basic human rights include shelter, food and education and I received much of that there. We were a sustainable group of people using direct action to combat homelessness and the right to grow our own food." -JU



"One of the most memorable experiences I had at the Commune wasn't necessarily the happiest but I still hold it dear to me nonetheless. During the last month or so of its existence, a group of Latino workers frequented the space and slept there almost every night. They had immigrated to the United States illegally in hopes of making a bit of money to send back to their families but were having little success. The four men had been staying at a nearby park for months and were one day invited by one of our comrades to the SFC. The men hadn't had much schooling and didn't speak English, but were brilliant handymen, though their alcoholism prevented them from getting much done. They drank constantly to numb the pain of not seeing their families and to forget about the false promise of success that they thought would be found in the States. One of the men, Rafael, particularly loved music, and though he could not play an instrument, sung his heart out anytime someone picked up a guitar. It was the only moment when one could visibly see the happiness on his face. One night, I was having a particularly thoughtful conversation about his family and aspirations. He told me that times were very dark for him. There wasn't much work to go around and his wife was struggling to feed his children. He felt like a failure. A few days prior, he was standing out in the rain on the side of the freeway, waiting for a large enough truck to drive by that he could walk in front and assure that it would take his life. As he waited for the right truck, an old, old man walked up beside him, clutching an umbrella. "It is not your time," the old man said, "You have much to do in this life." Rafael looked around and the old man was gone. He walked back to the park and had the best night's sleep of his life. He told me that he believes he had been visited by God, who had spared his life. I am not particularly spiritual, but I bawled like a baby when he told me that story. It was the first time I had cried in years." -PB

up and attendees peacefully watched documentaries on the South Central Farm and the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

Even with the massive positive outpour from the community, Gezi Gardens was raided on Thursday, June 13th by one of the most intense and militarized police raids since the rise of Occupy San Francisco. It was comparable only to the raid of the occupied abandoned 888 Turk Street building, which was ransacked by SFPD SWAT team who battered down doors, descended from the walls of surrounding buildings, and pointed automatic guns upon entering the building. On the early morning of June 13th, a similar energy was embodied by the armed SFPD officers who stormed over the back fence of the former Hayes Valley Farm and ambushed the people present. Some recall guns being pointed directly at their heads as orders were barked to get to the front gate immediately with no time to retrieve their belongings. After coming in over the fence quietly and in formation, SFPD flanked the entire area of the gardens. It seemed as if there was an officer for every individual.

At least one woman refused to exit in such a way, sitting on the ground in a peaceful act of civil disobedience and creating an impediment to the eviction with her simple act of resistance. At the time of the raid, three people were up in tree sits and remained there as the space was cleared of all people on the ground. Immediately, cherry pickers and other vehicles started to flood into the site. Officers set up foam padding around the base of trees and pointed strobe lights up into the canopies to disorient the tree sitters. Meanwhile, they aimed bright flood lights towards the exterior of the garden to blind any cameras taking footage of the eviction from the sidewalks around the gardens.

As people were brought down from the trees by force, bulldozers and excavation equipment began to enter the site and tear through the gardens, turning up the soil and laying waste to the edible and native plants growing there. This all happened before the crack of dawn, so those coming off the freeway on



During the following days, a total of six tree platforms were installed on the site. People worked all through the day preparing the soil, planting seeds, hauling in loads of compost and building garden beds. A free store was set up and food was always readily available for anyone who was hungry. Folks from all walks of life were given tours of the farm, even kids began to show up and play in the soil. The easy-going atmosphere of the occupation would not last long, however. On Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, a squad of SFPD officers handed out several sheets of paper with inescapable bold letters: **"NOTICE TO VACATE"**. They announced that anyone inside the gates of the Hayes Valley Farm was trespassing on private property and would be "subject to arrest or serious bodily harm" if they did not leave the grounds. The following morning, despite intimidation from police, protestors successfully turned away the workers sent to cut down the trees. The tree cutting company arrived to find locked gates and tree sitters mounted on harnesses. Workers left smiling, probably content to enjoy a much-needed day off.

The following day police presence steadily increased all throughout the Hayes Valley neighborhood. "In 10 years of living here," a local exclaimed, "I've never seen so many cops! They keep driving back on forth in front of my apartment". In an attempt to ward off the looming raid, a festival was called for on the coming Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, to raise awareness and occupy the park with more people than ever. Several hundred responded to the call; people from all over the Bay Area viewed the garden, listened to speakers and attended workshops. Some took part in a general assembly and discussed the future of the space. They were joined by Turkish citizens, some of whom had been to Gezi Park in Istanbul and expressed solidarity with those involved in the occupation of Hayes Valley Farm. Several bands also performed and heaps of food were shared. As night arose, a projector was set

"The commune, a beautiful time of cooperative living. Building the world of peace and love that we wish to manifest as reality. Making magnificent use of an abandoned space only to lose once again to the private interest greed that is the foundation of the country seized from my ancestors, Turtle Island inhabiting. This was a safe haven for intellectuals like myself to be off the street. The art and the music made within the walls of the SFC will always live in my heart and effectively eternally bonding our family. So many wonderful souls working together to create a better world. Let us use our education to let these truths unfold for ourselves and our future generations. We must now use the legal system to our advantage to defend our rights and not be left in the cold." -MN

"I came in off the street with just a potato sack on my back. There was inspiration, I have never felt so happy with my life as I did in the SFC. To know where it came from, a abandoned church/shooting gallery to a place of refuge and love. The energy of the community was chaotically beautiful, from cooking meals together, playing music, and everyone sleeping in the same room (mostly), it was always exiting to come home. What I loved most is how people treated each other so equally, and that you never knew who you might meet, what friends you might make. The music of our encounters rivals anything I have heard with my ears. Respect is key to these environments and we must treat each other equally to continue our communities. Co- ops, collectives, and communes are key to survival." -PDD

"Ruff ruff, ruff ruff ruff!!!" -Sampson

"Give what you can and get what you need!" Here's a house full of minds and time to be filled, a roomful of paint, tools that break down and rebuild. There is enough to decline and enough to share. There are greens in the backyard and strawberries out front, a circle of chairs to sit in the sun, a yoga mat and library. We threw out the mind-numbing soulsuck TV and filled the walls with mural prisms. A piano organ is wheeled in from down the street, music strikes on the rooftop and in the backyard, an orchestration along rows of hand-me-down garden tools. Climb up the stairs for a jam in the attic. Anyone can pluck up an instrument and carol from room to room holding their own or blending tunes, inspiring voice and dance, trilling strings with toes crawling with passion for rich sound. Dogs are among us, wild bounding browns who remind us to play fully and tangle and heal from spats. I am here and I have never seen people so beautiful and wise, sleeping side by side, our rapid eye motions carousing through lullabies of snores. I'm here and I think: go where people are going, find out their whys for doing how they do, step up and ask: what do you want to see? Check yourself and how you feel. I'm riding collective dreams by seeing a site with fresh eyes. I see people making love, making art together, opening, adding input to ongoing conversation. I see compassion taking action, asking all to consider one another. Questions arise about the permanence of the structure. As in nature, we cycle: tear down and regrow, regather. The whole model is a skillshare, a grounding lifting empowering building of new relation and community. I am here among family - fugitive children, teacher, gardenbed creature, mother, genderqueer artist - fighter thinker writer - musician planter - grower - speaker - builder and we are all challenging each other - learning that everybody needs to buddy up with WHOs around them and put in care and time and doing, being. I felt all ears and alive to be here before the walls came down and the space was boarded back up and its beings scattered out again to find their own means. I felt truly rich" -RM

It was June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, and back in the United States, activists prepared themselves for an occupation of their own. With a sound-system in tow and the creeping San Francisco heat bearing down upon them, a mass of approximately 50 protestors marched from the Free Farm (another community space which faced eviction in January, 2014) to the Hayes Valley Farm. Carrying pitchforks and shovels, they took the streets and commenced their trek from farm to farm as cars packed with seeds, planters and other equipment followed closely behind. As they neared the location the mass eased their way through the gates and set to work; the land was tilled and a myriad of seed starts were planted. Almost instantly, a permaculture based water collection system was installed around the twisty rows of perennial vegetables. The protestors vowed to stay the night, and every proceeding night, until the land was free from the grips of the real estate industry. They renamed the space "Gezi Gardens" in solidarity with the ongoing resistance in Turkey.

Within hours, platforms were set up in the various Eucalyptus trees throughout the farm. Protestors hoisted themselves up and began to "tree-sit", a tactic used by environmental activists to hinder forcible expulsion by police. Colorful banners were hung up all along the fence and tents were popped. As the day progressed, several structures began to develop, including a common area, a library and an art space. People from the neighborhood began to take notice. They trickled into the farm, expressing their support and donating supplies and food. A couple offered their barbecue and an array of lawn chairs. Another drove their truck onto the land and donated several crates of pears. There was little police presence throughout the day, which was a relief to some but worried others, and protestors grew anxious that a raid could sneak in overnight. As the sun began to set, a group of SFPD officers waltzed through the unsecured gates and were given a brief tour. They instructed people to leash their dogs and left.

The Hayes Valley Farm was a vibrant urban food forest in the middle of the gentrified yuppiedom that is the Hayes Valley neighborhood of San Francisco. The plot of land was once home to asphalt and a freeway on-ramp, but when the farm arose, it became host to vast amounts of edible plants and a thriving wildlife habitat; birds, butterflies, bees, and other wildlife populated the land, as well as, gardeners, students, permaculture enthusiasts, and hundreds of rows of vegetation. The farm began in January of 2010, when the city struck a deal with a collective of agriculturalists. They would be loaned the land on the understanding that it would be returned after a few years to be developed into housing. In 2013, the space was slated to be turned into a 185-unit condominium, displacing the gardens, the trees, the community, the huge potential of the beautifully maintained soil, and most importantly, the ability to feed thousands of people. Not willing to let this vital community space disappear, a group of activists gave a call-out to save the Hayes Valley Farm from development. They planned to occupy the land and halt the eviction that threatened one of the last green spaces in the city.

The action was called in solidarity with the concurring uprising in Turkey over the government's plan to develop Gezi Park into a massive strip mall. After attempting to camp out in the park and stop the demolition crew from tearing the space to bits, the citizens of Istanbul were subject to brutal repression at the hands of their rampant Prime Minister and his army of unrestrained police. The modest protest turned into a mass movement overnight. Less than 24 hours after a few dozen protestors had been cruelly beaten and tear-gassed, thousands of fervent citizens came out in support. Soon, millions of Turks in over 90 cities had taken to the streets. What began as a humble land occupation to protect a park had spiraled into massive demonstrations, street battles, heinous police brutality and pressure for the resignation of Prime Minister Erdogan.



**"I know the police cause you trouble  
They cause trouble everywhere  
But when you die and go to heaven  
You find no policeman there."  
—Woody Guthrie**

On the evening of May 16, 2013, five Bay Area activists were brutally assaulted by police at San Francisco State University. Just 36 hours prior to the incident, they had been viciously evicted from their home at the San Francisco Commune by SFPD and a SWAT team clad in full riot gear and armed to the teeth with automatic weapons. Having lost their home, the five activists sought shelter and much needed rest from some friends, students at SF State. They were in one of their friend's dorm room, playing music and sharing laughs, when one decided to go out for a cigarette. As he set foot outside, two police officers approached him and began to verbally harass him, demanding that he explain what his business was on campus. When he declined and exercised his right to walk away, the police followed him back into the dorm. An altercation occurred when they attempted to detain him, which caught the attention of the other activists who were within



earshot. They rushed out of the dorm room and saw their comrade being held down by the two burly cops.

A screaming match commenced between activists and officers. The activists demanded an answer as to why their friend was being arrested but received no response. Feeling overwhelmed, the two officers called for backup. Almost instantly three more SFPD officers stormed out of the elevator and into the hallway and began arresting everyone in sight. One activist was wrestled to the ground and repeatedly jabbed in the ribs with a flashlight. Another was held down and choked as she screamed in pain. One onlooker had recorded the entirety of the incident; the video went viral within hours, popping up all over the internet. Eventually, the five activists were placed in handcuffs and swiftly ushered outside. Upwards of 50 SFPD officers began to appear, sectioning off the building with caution tape and stopping anyone from going close to the scene. An inquisitive crowd began to gather and chant: **"COPS GO HOME! COPS GO HOME!"**

Various officers who were present were also involved in the raid of the SF Commune a day prior. Once in custody, the arrestees were physically abused and denied medical treatment. One of them recalls being held down on a stretcher and wheeled into a police van. Several officers obscured the windows as one proceeded to violently rub his knuckles onto the activist's sternum in a presumed attempt to inflict serious pain while minimizing visible bruising. To cover up the injuries they had sustained, the arrestees were not allowed visitors for several days and meetings with their lawyers were kept brief. The five activists were ultimately accused of a variety of fraudulent charges, including assault on a peace officer, lynching (attempting to de-arrest an someone), inciting a riot, resisting arrest and trespassing, and an excessive \$110,000 bail was set on each individual. The arrestees therefore became known as the SFC5.



**"Suburbia is where developers bulldoze the trees,  
then name the streets after themselves."**

**—Bill Vaughn**

According to the most recent world hunger statistics, there is enough food in the world to feed everyone 2,720 calories a day. Despite a 70 percent population increase, world agriculture produces 17 percent more calories per person today as opposed to 30 years ago. Regardless of these facts, even in the richest, most powerful nation in the world, 1 out of 7 people still struggle with hunger. Food that is nutritious and not laden with preservatives is becoming harder to come by and all over the United States, viable community operated spaces are falling by the wayside to the real estate industry. The displacement of green space is particularly visible in the San Francisco Bay Area, where a myriad of community farms and gardens are losing the battle against housing development. City officials seem to be content with seeing slabs of concrete rather than vegetation, and luxury high-rise apartments and chain stores win out against anything that directly benefits the community, such as a community garden. In their eyes, it makes perfect sense; housing and businesses are highly profitable, gardens and free food...not so much.





# RALLY AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY ON SF STATE CAMPUS

Tuesday, May 21st, 2pm, Malcom X Plaza  
SF State University Main Quad

On the evening May 16, 2013, five San Francisco activists were brutally assaulted by police on the SFSU campus after having been invited as guests to Mary Ward Hall by students. The police used excessive and cruel force in restraining the individuals and several of those involved were hospitalized after having sustained injuries. The posted bail for each individual is \$10,000, and based on completely false charges. The police have denied medical attention to multiple individuals and have taken no responsibility for the ruthless beatings they administered. We must stand as one and raise our voices against the brutality being conducted against our students and their guests!

If you were present, have ANY information at all and can provide a statement please e-mail:  
PUNKMONKS@GMAIL.COM

Discussion: Monday, May 20th  
2pm @ Malcolm X Plaza



**DROP THE CHARGES!**  
**FREE THE SF COMMUNE 5!**  
**MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR THOSE IN JAIL!**

That night, the story made its rounds on several local news circuits. Mainstream news outlets openly sided with the oppressive force carried out by the SFPD and condemned the brutalized "trespassers". The SFPD declined to provide statements on the unjustified violence they had used, but it is believed that the violence was retaliatory political repression due to the raid of the SF Commune. The university promptly announced that they believed the action to be warranted and just. They claimed that the activists were "unauthorized" to be in the dorms because the students they were visiting had not signed them in at the front desk, which was part of school policy. When questioned about this, various students were not even aware such a policy existed.

The following day, students, activists and friends of the SFC5 held an impromptu rally on the university campus. Nearly 50 people congregated at Malcolm X Plaza that afternoon. They grouped up in a circle and passed around a megaphone through which they voiced their grievances and thoughts on the incident. A couple of television crews appeared and interviewed protestors but made no effort in producing any intelligent discussion on the event. The mass of protestors eventually set off on a short march towards SFSU's administration office. They stormed the premises and sprinted up the long flights of stairs, chanting, banging on doors, and demanding that the university explain their misconduct. The building was hastily shut down, doors were locked and Joseph Greenwell, the Dean of Students, was sent to quell the demonstration. He offered to participate in a discussion to address people's concerns. The protestors filed downstairs to convene with Greenwell and his posse, ordering that the arrestees be released immediately, their charges be dropped and the university apologize for their handling of the incident. The administrators refused to show any wrongdoing on the university's part; they insisted that they would stand by their previous statement and still considered the five activists as "trespassers".

With their friends still in jail and their demands not met, demonstrators announced another rally for the coming Monday. A variety of volunteers, including students, Bay Area anarchists and civil rights lawyers, worked tirelessly, sending out newsletters and printing out hundreds of leaflets. Flyers sprung up on virtually every



bulletin board on campus. Chalked slogans stating "No cops on campus" and "SFPD beat my friends" decorated the walls throughout the university. One night, a student was detained by SFSUPD officer Ruiz while attempting to tape a flyer onto the front window of Mary Ward Hall, the dorm where the incident had occurred. When the officer was asked to identify himself (his nametag was obscured by his uniform), he became angry and instructed the student to "sit down or be beat down". A few passersby approached and attempted to film the event, but Ruiz snatched the camera out of one student's hand, stating that he was interfering with police activity. He continued to threaten to inflict physical pain on anyone who didn't comply. The student who had attempted to put up the flyer was finally released but incessantly followed around campus and verbally harassed by police for several days afterward.

Monday morning dawned and protestors scrambled to ready themselves for the rally. They painted signs, hung up banners and secured a portable sound system to a shopping cart. Many of them were concerned that drawing a large crowd would prove difficult, as it was finals week and most students were either in class or drowning in a sea of textbooks. Regardless, they pushed on, and at 2pm, folks began to gather once again at Malcolm X Plaza. Heated rhetoric filled the air as speakers recounted their experiences with police brutality, and within a half-hour, the crowd had swelled to nearly 100 people. They began to march throughout the campus, stopping at the administration building as well as the Mary Ward Hall dorm. As the mass approached, the entrance to the dorm was speedily shut and secured. Two police officers stood guard with grins on their faces and hands on their holsters. The protestors decided to re-focus their attention on the police substation on campus. They blocked a major street along the way as protestors clad in black masks spray-painted slogans and various circle-A's on nearby buildings. As the mass neared their destination, news broke out that the SFC5 were being released from jail. The overjoyed protestors held a dance party in front of the substation, but as more and more police began to emerge, the crowd dissolved and headed back to Malcolm X Plaza, propelled by the rumor of cake and cookies.

A few hours later, the five activists were released after being wrongfully incarcerated for almost a week. The school year ended and students went back home. Many would never forget the events that had transpired on their campus, and some chose to not to return to the school afterwards. After a number of court appearances and much deliberation, all of the charges against the SFC5 were finally dropped. A few of them are still severely affected by the event and suffer from post-traumatic stress problems. The police officers involved have not been, and most likely will not be, disciplined for their misconduct.